

## Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01

TRSE-00 SNM-02 DEAE-00 /078 W  
----- 059078

R 272059Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3712

INFO AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMCONSUL CALI

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT PFOR ELAB SNAR

SUBJ: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA

1. SUMMARY THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO BOGOTA FEB 22-23 STRENGTHENED HIS FRIENDLY PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ AND RECEIVED FAVORABLE MEDIA COVERAGE. STRIKES AND DISORDERS CAUSED CONCERN TO GOC LEADERS. COCAINE SEIZURES IN 1975 RESULTING FROM US/COLOMBIAN EFFORTS WERE VERY SUBSTANTIAL- 620 KILOS. PRESS STORIES ON LOCKHEED BRIBERY ALLEGATIONS WERE ACCOMPANIED BY STORIES ON SIMILAR CHARGES INVOLVING FRENCH AND GERMAN FIRMS. END SUMMARY.

2. SECRETARY'S VISIT. THE SECRETARY'S VISIT REINFORCED THE GOOD PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ, BEGUN DURING THE SEPT 1975 STATE VISIT. CONCURRENT STUDENT AND LABOR DISORDERS IN BOGOTA DID NOT MAR THE CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH THE VISIT TOOK PLACE. FONMIN LIEVANO INTRODUCED WHAT MAY BECOME AN IMPORTANT THEME IN US-COLOMBIAN RELATIONS, IN EFFECT PROPOSING A SPECIAL US-LA RELATIONSHIP INVOLVING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PREFERENTIAL ACCESS TO US MARKETS FOR LA PRIMARY, AND CERTAIN

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS (BOGOTA A-16). PRESS REPORTS OF THE VISIT WERE ENTHUSIASTIC AND COMMENTED FREQUENTLY ON THE SECRETARY'S WARMTH AND HUMOR. COMMENTARY AFTER THE VISIT WAS MILDLY POSITIVE, EXPRESSING GRATIFICATION, BUT LAMENTING SCARCE GOC COMMENT BEYOND OFFICIAL STATEMENTS. US COVERAGE STRESSED STUDENT-POLICE CLASHES AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND THE UNUSUALLY HEAVY SECURITY MEASURES.

3. TROUBLING DISORDERS. ALTHOUGH NOT UNUSUAL AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, STRIKES AND SIORDERS TROUBLED COLOMBIA'S DOMESTIC ORDERS. LABOR DISPUTES HAVE CAUSED OR THREATENED TO CAUSE DISRUPTION IN THE FINANCE MINISTRY, BANKING, PORTS, THE PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY, IN THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, AND AMONG TEACHERS. STUDENT UNREST IN MEDELLIN CONTINUES. THE FATE OF LABOR LEADER JOSE MERCADO, KIDNAPPED ON FEB 15, REMAINS UNCERTAIN. PRESIDNET LOPEZ HAS CONTINUED THE STATE OF SIEGE AND HAS CALLED A CABINET MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT. THE GOC RESPONSE IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE FIRM. (BOGOTA 2111)

4. COMBINED US /COLOMBIAN NARCOTICS OPERATION NETS RECORD COCAINE SEIZURES. UNDERWAY SINCE MI-OCTOBER, OPERATION KITCHEN--A COMBINED US /COLOMBIAN EFFORT AIMED AT COCAINE TRAFFICKING HAS RESULTED AS OF THIS DATE IN COCAINE SEIZURES AND DESTRUCTION TOTALING 620 KILOGRAMS. GOC NATIONAL POLICE ALSO ARRESTED MORE THAN 70 TRAFFICKERS, INCLUDING SEVERAL AMERICANS AND THE WELL-KNOWN BENJAMIN HERRERA WHO IS WANTED BOTH IN COLOMBIA AND IN THE UNITED STATES. THE OPERATION ALSO RESULTED IN EIZURES FROM TRAFFICKERS OF MORE THAN 140,000 DOLLARS IN CASH. FOR COMPARATIVE PURPOSES, IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT IN 1975 ALL US ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES COMBINED SEIZED A TOTAL OF 534 KILOGRAMS OF COCAINE IN THE US.

5. LOCKHEED GETS COMPANY. WHILE THE GOC CONTINUED ITS INVEST-IGATION OF THE LOCKHEED BRIBERY ALLEGATIONS, THE BOGOTA PRESS RAISED CHARGES OF OTHER IRREGULARITIES IN COLOMBIAN ARMS PURCHASES. FRENCH AND GERMAN FIRMS WERE ALSO ACCUSED OF SUBORNING COLOMBIAN OFFICIALS. THE CHARGES OF BRIBERY BY THE FRENCH CONCERNED THE 1970 PURCHASE OF MIRAGE AIRCRAFT. THE ALLEGED GERMAN BRIBERY INVOLVED THE PURCHASE OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. THE MIRAGE PURCHASE HAS LONG BEEN THE SUBJECT OF SPECULATION AND RUMOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN BOGOTA CIRCLES. THE OUTLAY WAS EXTREMELY COSTLY BY GOC STANDARDS; IF THE CHARGES PROVE TRUE, THEY COULD DAMAGE THE CAREERS OF NUMEROUS COLOMBIAN AIR FORCE OFFICIALS. VAKY

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLITICAL SUMMARIES, POLITICAL SITUATION, MINISTERIAL VISITS, LABOR STRIKES, DRUG SEIZURES  
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**Draft Date:** 27 FEB 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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